



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk (860)441-6640
Town Manager
(860)441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Representatives Jeff Armstrong, Joe Baril, Tom Barnhart, Lori Bartinik, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Wayne Chiapperini, Michael Collins, Joe delaCruz, Luanne DeMatto, Susan Dowling, Shirley Dunbar-Rose, George Edwards Jr, Robert Garcia, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Barbara Hoelck, David Miner, Nancy Mitchell, Deborah Monteiro, Matt Morton, Scott Newsome, John Nugent, Nora Patterson, Darcy Peruzzotti, Kevin Power, Don Pratt, Rita Schmidt, Jack Sebastian, Jennifer Smuts, Eleanor Steere, Fritz Stein, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, George Swift, Patty Thunberg, Cheryl Tilney, Tom Vivirito, Robert Walker Sr, and Elizabeth Weil.

Monday, May 2, 2005

7:30 PM

Senior Center

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

26 members were present at roll call (Rep. delaCruz arrived at 7:38 p.m.) and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steere, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg and Rep. Vivirito
Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Weil

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Mayor Harry Watson, Councilors Natalie Billing, Catherine Kolnaski, Elissa Wright, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Mayor Watson.

C. CALL OF THE MEETING

was read by the Moderator.

2005-0059 Annual RTM Budget Meeting

RESOLUTION SETTING RTM BUDGET MEETING DATE ON THE 2005-2006 ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 8.4.3 of the Groton Town Charter, the Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting will be held at the Groton Senior Center, Newtown Road (Route #117), Groton, Connecticut, on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

(Above notice to be published in The Day on April 18, 2005.)

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

Beth Tillman, 925 River Road, Mystic, requests continued support for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra. She complimented and thanked the Town of Groton and the residents for being strong supporters in the past.

Ed Ettinger, 174 Cedar Road, Mystic, spoke about the effect of the 2005 revaluation on residential property taxes. He estimates that the average tax increase on residential properties after reval will be 30%. Mr. Ettinger urged the RTM to request an estimate of the impact of revaluation on property taxes for the 2006 budget year.

(Rep. delaCruz arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Edith Fairgrieve, 8 Rowland Street, Mystic, spoke as a director of the Groton Open Space Association in favor of the \$25,000 open space fund approved by both the Town Manager and the Council. Ms. Fairgrieve stressed the importance of having a good plan to guide the preservation process and a viable acquisition fund to implement the plan when a crucial purchase of designated parcels becomes available.

Sidney VanZandt, 3 Front Street, Noank, spoke in support of Groton Open Space Association. She stated it is very important to protect watershed areas from development and estuaries from pollution.

Julie Maisch, 42 Circle Avenue, spoke in support of the \$3,000 appropriation for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Concert. She stated that many Groton youths are in the youth orchestra, and residents serve as board members and participate in the choir. Ms. Maisch stated that this request is not an increase, but a continued level of support, and thanked the RTM members for their volunteer service.

John Sutherland, 32 Neptune Drive, noted that he feels the budget is already in place and no changes are expected. He stated that with the expected BRAC closure announcement next week, the Town should not use \$3 million from the General Fund this year due to the economic impact if the Groton Naval Base is on the list. He feels an operational and efficiency study of the Town and Education system is needed.

Moderator Dunbar-Rose read a letter from Diane Marley, Crosswinds Drive, Noank, suggesting that using money from the General Fund is not the answer to difficult budget issues. Ms. Marley says it is time to cut spending and to focus on economic development to help ease the tax burden of all residents. She thanks all members for listening and for the time they give to keep Groton a wonderful and affordable place to live.

E. COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Dunbar-Rose reported that Rep. Mitchell is absent due to an illness and will be out of town from May 12-24, 2005; Rep. Streeter is absent due to the City of Groton elections and will be out of town from May 18 through the end of the month. Rep. Stein is absent due to a death in the family.

Rep. Collins, chairman of the Public Works Committee, reported an error on the Capitol Projects-FYE 2006 spreadsheet. The committee's figure for item 3f should be \$90,000.

A motion to adjourn at 7:56 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 4, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 4, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose. 29 members were present at roll call and a quorum was declared. (Reps. delaCruz, Nugent and Svencer arrived later.)

Members Present: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil

Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Stein and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Director of Public Works Gary Schneider, Assistant Directors Carl Almquist and John Carrington, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose announced that the regular RTM meeting scheduled for May 11, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. has been cancelled and that the budget session originally scheduled to follow that meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Moderator referred items 2005-0116 RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING OF UNEXPENDED CIP FUNDS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION and 2005-0132 RESOLUTION FOR FYE2005 FOURTH QUARTER TRANSFERS to the Finance Committee with a return date of June 8, 2005.

F. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Works Committee

Chairman Michael Collins read the minutes from meetings held on April 18 and April 20, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Schmidt and so voted unanimously.

Reps. delaCruz, Nugent and Svencer arrived during the committee report.

Account 1035 - Public Works

Motion for \$6,507,157 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.

Motion to Amend to \$6,378,000 was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded Rep. Cerf. Rep. Sebastian stated several reasons for the reduction. He feels that the existence of three levels of management in the Public Works Department is unnecessary and inefficient and that some employees do not have enough work to keep them busy.

Public Works Director Gary Schneider presented information similar to that given at the Town Council budget review session. He stated that personnel expenses are less than the operational portion of the Public Works budget and that staff has been reduced gradually since 1991 through consolidation, re-organization and attrition.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,378,000 was defeated 2 in favor, 30 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cerf and Sebastian.)

The vote on \$6,507,157 carried 29 in favor, 2 opposed, and 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf and Sebastian. Abstaining: Rep. Steere)

Account 2020 - Sewer Operating Fund

Motion for \$4,817,640 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 2030 - Solid Waste Fund

Motion for \$3,357,677 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Account 6040 - Fleet Reserve Fund

Motion for \$1,838,057 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded Rep.

Granatosky.

Motion to Amend to \$1,694,000 was made by Rep. Steere, seconded by Rep. Cerf. Rep. Steere stated that the amended figure was last year's budget number and that she would like to wait for the completion of the Fleet Reserve study before increasing this number.

The Town Manager explained the leasing options that may be recommended for several vehicles in lieu of purchasing. He urged the members not to make major reductions to the Fleet Reserve Program. He stated that the purpose of the program is to make annual budget contributions to prevent extreme fluctuations in the budget from one year to the next when major equipment replacement is necessary.

The vote on \$1,694,000 was defeated 4 in favor, 28 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cerf, Power, Sebastian and Steere.)

The vote on \$1,838, 057 carried 28 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Power, Sebastian and Steere.)

The Moderator announced a 10 minute recess at 8:28 p.m.

Capital Item - Pavement Management Program Implementation

Motion for \$150,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Poquonnock/South Rd Underpasses

Motion for \$65,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and carried 31 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Culvert Rehabilitation

Motion for \$35,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and carried 31 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - New Sidewalk Construction-Thomas Rd Bikeway

Motion for \$90,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and carried 27 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Harrell, Smuts, Steere, and Thunberg.)

Capital Item - Police Station

Motion for \$75,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Smuts).

Capital Item - Human Services Building

Motion for \$230,000 as approved by the committee was made Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell and carried 30 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Vivirito), 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Town Hall

Motion for \$125,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded Rep. Schmidt and carried 30 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Sebastian), 1 abstention (Rep. Barnhart.)

Capital Item - Town Hall annex Complex-Salt/Sand Storage Facility

Motion for \$75,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded Rep. Smuts and carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Mitchell.)

Capital Item - Jabez Smith House

Motion for \$28,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Schmidt and carried 31 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Annex Building-Town Hall Annex Complex

Motion for \$0 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Cerf. (The committee was not able to agree on a recommended number.)

Motion to Amend to \$15,000 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Monteiro. Rep. Garcia stated he was opposed and would not vote for the amended figure. He feels it would be inappropriate to fund a design study for the Town Hall Annex and then expect taxpayers to approve and fund another large building project since the Town has just begun the school construction project.

Discussion ensued about using other facilities in town, including vacant schools, the library and the senior center.

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, explained the demand for and usage of existing rooms and the costs that would be associated with other facilities. This could include renovations, set-up, break-down and monitors.

The Town Manager stated that an estimate of the costs for other facility usage could be provided but that availability of other facilities would be determined by the Senior Center program schedule, school calendars and events, and usage of the library by community groups.

(Rep. DeMatto left at this point in the meeting.)

The vote on the amendment of \$15,000 was 11 in favor, 20 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Granatosky, Harrell, Hoelck, Nugent, Patterson, Pratt, Schmidt, Svencer, Swift, Tilney, Dunbar-Rose.)

The vote on \$0 carried 21 in favor, 10 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Collins, Granatosky, Harrell, Hoelck, Nugent, Patterson, Schmidt, Swift, Tilney, Dunbar-Rose.)

Capital Item - Golf Course Facilities

Motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Garcia and carried 30 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Welles Road (Facilities Maintenance)

Motion for \$55,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Daycare/Community Policing Facilities

Motion for \$90,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell and carried 30 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Smuts).

Capital Item - Transfer Station

Motion for \$0 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

Motion to Amend to \$50,000 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld. Director of Public Works Gary Schneider explained the need for video surveillance. Reasons include safety of personnel and residents, illegal dumping at the facility and Town liability. The vote on the amendment was 19 in favor, 11 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Bartnik, Cerf, Collins, delaCruz, Mitchell, Newsome, Sebastian, Steere, Streeter, Thunberg, Vivirito. Abstaining: Rep. Barnhart.) The Motion passed.

Capital Item - Asbestos Floor Tile Removal, William Seely

Motion for \$120,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - WPCF Sewer Line Infrastructure Repairs

Motion for \$6,400,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

Assistant Director Carl Almquist stated the repair figure came from the consulting firm which estimated the cost to upgrade sewers in the Poquonnock Bridge area.

The vote on \$6,400,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Mechanical/Electrical Equipment Replacement

Motion for \$640,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Granatosky and carried 30 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Facility Repairs-WPCF

Motion for \$380,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and carried 30 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Capital Item - Riverview Avenue Coastal Access Stairs

Motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Smuts and carried 30 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Thunberg).

A motion to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. to a time definite Thursday, May 5, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Garcia, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Thursday May 5, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose.

24 members were present at roll call and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Bartinik, delaCruz, and Newsome arrived later.)

Members Present: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil
Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Collins, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Stein, Rep. Swift, Rep. Tilney and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Planning & Development Director Mike Murphy, Manager of Inspection Services Kevin Quinn, Manager of Planning Services Barbara Goodrich, Economic/Community Development Specialist Barbara Strother, Human Services Director Marge Fondulas, Ledge Light Health District Director Francis Crowley, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

The Moderator reminded members that the regular RTM meeting on Wednesday May 11, 2005 has been cancelled and that the budget session will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Collins, Garcia, Granatosky, and Stein would be absent and that Rep. Swift would be late.

Health and Human Services Committee

Chairman DeMatto read the minutes from the meeting held on April 11, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

(Reps. delaCruz and Bartinik arrived at this time.)

Account 1051- Human Services

Motion for \$684,324 as approved by committee was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Patterson and carried 25 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Account 7320 - Human Services Assistance Fund

Motion for \$21,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Patterson and so voted unanimously.

Account 10540 - Outside Agencies- Ledge Light Health District

Motion for \$291,900 as approved by committee was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

(Rep. Newsome arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Account 10541-3 - Outside Agencies - VNA

Motion for \$859,497 as approved by committee was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Patterson and carried 26 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Accounts 10545 - Outside Service Agencies, and 10546 Outside Cultural Agencies

Motion for \$77,400 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Dematto, seconded by Rep. Patterson and carried 26 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Pratt reported that the meeting of April 20, 2005 was cancelled due to lack of a quorum and read the minutes of the meeting held May 5, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Account 1046 - Planning and Development Services

Motion for \$1,138,581 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and carried 26 in favor, 1 abstention (Rep. Sebastian).

The Moderator called a recess at 7:25 p.m.

Capital Item - Downtown Gateway & Streetscape Improvements

Motion for \$ 20,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Economic Assistance Fund

Motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. to a time definite of Tuesday, May 10, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Tuesday May 10, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose. 36 members were present at roll call and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil

Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Peruzzotti and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Mitchell, Board of Education Chairman Elizabeth Gianacoplos, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Business Manager Hugh Hunter, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Communications

The Moderator announced that Rep. Mitchell called and would be absent.

Moderator Dunbar-Rose informed the members that at the RTM budget session on May 4, 2005, a vote was taken to appropriate \$50,000 for Capital Item 6M which would provide cameras at the Transfer Station. The vote on this item was 19 in favor, 11 opposed, 1 abstention and the figure was declared to have passed. However, since the manager's recommended figure of \$50,000 had been reduced to \$0 by the Town Council, restoration of the \$50,000 would have required a 2/3rd's

vote of the RTM. In this case, 2/3rd's of those voting would have been 20 votes. Therefore, the declaration that the figure had passed was made in error.

Rep. Steinfeld asked if the RTM could revisit this account.

The Moderator stated that reconsideration must be done at the following meeting and she was not aware of the error then. The Moderator apologized to the members for this error.

Rep. Power reminded the Recreation Committee that their meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

Education Committee

Chairman Scott Newsome read the minutes from the meeting held on April 29, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Schmidt and so voted unanimously.

Account 1080 - Education

Motion for \$65,771,300 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson.

Rep. Newsome provided information about the committee actions and discussions that took place during the Board of Education's budget review sessions in January and February.

Dr. Mitchell addressed questions from several members. He stated that most towns have positions comparable to the curriculum development position and director of media services position but that they may be called something else. He added that these positions are required by the union contract.

Dr. Mitchell feels there is room for improvement on student test scores, teacher performance, and closing the achievement gap. He stated that the "No Child Left Behind" legislation has had some impact but mirrors the effect state-wide.

In response to Rep. Cerf Dr. Mitchell stated he would like the Board to restore the Gifted and Talented Program next year.

In response to Rep. DeMatto Mr. Hunter explained that the budget difference between this year and last year is caused by elimination of four positions, union contract increases, step raises and budgeting \$400,000 for turnover caused by retirements and resignations.

Dr. Mitchell stated that the number of assistant principals has been reduced through attrition and declining enrollment. He stated that other duties are associated with the vice principal position such as instructional support.

Rep. Patterson pointed out that Fitch Senior High School was rated approximately 623 out of 1,000 schools that were recognized in Newsweek Magazine as the best in the nation.

The vote on \$65,771,300 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Fitch High School

Motion for \$20,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - West Side Middle School

Motion for \$450,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson.

Mr. Greenleaf gave the reasons for the replacement of the wood floor.

The vote on \$450,000 carried unanimously.

The Moderator announced a recess at 7:46 p.m.

Capital Item - Charles Barnum School

Motion for \$55,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Claude Chester School

Motion for \$60,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Mary Morrison School

Motion for \$85,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - S.B. Butler School

Motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Newsome, seconded by Rep. Patterson and so voted unanimously.

Rep. Smuts stated that it is her intention to make a motion to suspend the rules in order to revisit the Transfer Station Capital Budget Item on Monday May 16, 2005.

A motion to adjourn at 8:24 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 11, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. delaCruz and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 11, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose. 31 members were present at roll call and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Bartinik, Nugent and Svencer arrived later.)

Members Present: Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil
Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Newsome and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Assistant to the Director of Administrative Services Joyce Sauchuk, Manager of Information Technology Lori Parker, Manager of Emergency Communications Joseph Sastre, Tax Collector Nancy Dytko, Treasurer Cindy Landry, Assessor John Philip, Purchasing Agent John Piacenza, Acting Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Police Captain John Crowley, City Mayor Dennis Popp, City Finance Director Tony Timpano, City Highway Director Tim Umrysz, Groton Long Point Zoning Official Gordon Lange, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Finance Committee

Chairman Schmidt read the minutes of meetings held on April 12, April 13, and April 27, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Miner.

Rep. Streeter requested that the record reflect the fact that her appointment to the Finance Committee was effective on April 27, 2005 and that she was out of town on the 27th. Since she had not yet been appointed to the committee she was not absent for the meetings on April 12th and April 13th.

Rep. Bartinik arrived during the reading of the minutes.

The vote on the minutes carried unanimously.

Account 10900 - City of Groton Police

Motion for \$2,007,393 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Granatosky.

Rep. Cerf pointed out that the City of Groton budget handout was copied incorrectly.

The vote on \$2,007,393 carried unanimously.

Account 10901 - City of Groton - Highway

Motion for \$1,838,122 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins.

The City Mayor explained the increase and what projects are included in this account.

The vote on \$1,838,122 carried unanimously.

Account 10902 - City of Groton - Crossing guards

Motion for \$136,361 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 10910 - Groton Long Point - Police

Motion for \$177,160 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Baril.)

Account 10911 - Groton Long Point - Highway

Motion for \$176,200 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Baril.)

Account 1092 - Fire Districts PILOT

Motion for \$246,012 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Pratt and so voted unanimously.

Account 1006 - Legal Services

Motion for \$345,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins.

In response to Rep. Monteiro, the Town Manager stated that the increase was due to the increase in the number of pending lawsuits, an increase in the hourly fees, the number of projected tax appeal cases, and a redistribution between cost centers.

The Manager answered Rep. Collins' questions about special attorneys. He stated that 7 union agreements are being negotiated simultaneously and that revaluation court cases can be very expensive.

Rep. Nugent arrived during the Manager's comments.

The vote on \$345,000 carried 32 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Nugent.)

Account 1010 - Executive Management

Motion for \$376,200 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1013 - Financial Administration

Motion for \$1,293,429 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Pratt and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Kronos Payroll System

Motion for \$36,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Miner and so voted unanimously.

Account 2120 - Revaluation Fund

Motion for \$297,075 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1014 - Administration Services

Motion for \$2,621,584 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Information Technology Acquisition - Network

Motion for \$76,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep.

Miner and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Information Technology Acquisition - Hansen

Motion for \$92,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Information Technology Recovery Planning

Motion for \$23,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Mobile Data Terminal Project

Motion for \$130,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Pratt and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Voicemail System

Motion for \$54,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1070 - Insurance & Claims

Motion for \$598,224 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Account 1071 - Self Funded Plans

Motion for \$4,196,839 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

In response to Rep. Steinfeld, the Town Manager explained the reasons for the increase in workers compensation.

Mr. Ackerman stated that the increase reflects a two year impact to the self funded plan when one year goes over the amount budgeted.

The vote on \$4,196,839 carried unanimously.

Account 6050 - Computer Replacement Fund

Motion for \$64,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins.

In response to Rep. Cerf, the Town Manager explained the many programs supported by and services provided by the Information Technology Department. He stated that computer equipment replacement is funded over a period of years from individual departments and managed by IT staff. This account is similar to Fleet Reserve Fund.

The vote on \$64,500 carried unanimously.

The Moderator announced a recess at 8:24 p.m.

Rep. Svencer arrived during the recess.

Public Safety Committee

Chairman Vivirito read the minutes of the meeting held on April 9, 2005. (Minutes are on file.) Rep. Vivirito disclosed that he and Rep. Morton are former members of the Police Department. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1024 - Public Safety

Motion for \$5,849,682 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. to a time definite Monday, May 16, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Monday May 16, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose.

30 members were present at roll call and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Bartinik, Collins and delaCruz arrived later.)

Members Present: Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Nugent, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil
Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Garcia, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Streeter and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Parks and Recreation Director John Silsby and staff members, Registrars Vicki Rossman and Allen Palmer, Groton Public Library Director Alan Benkert and board members, Bill Memorial Library Director Hali Keeler and board members, Mystic & Noank Library Director Joanna Case and board members, Manager of Emergency Communications Joe Sastre, Mayor Harry Watson, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Communications

The Moderator read an invitation from the Board of Education inviting members to attend a ceremony honoring employee retirements of the school system on June 7, at 7:00 p.m. at Fitch Senior High School.

Capital Item - Transfer Station (continuation)

The Moderator announced that on Capital Item 6M-Transfer Station, the amendment for \$50,000 had failed on May 4, 2005, and notice was given on May 11 that this account would be continued this evening. She asked if there was any discussion before voting on the Main Motion of \$0. Motion to Amend to \$49,999 was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Baril. Rep. Smuts feels this is an important project.

The Moderator pointed out that a 2/3rds vote was needed to pass since the Council had reduced the number to 0.

The vote carried 21 in favor, 9 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Stein, Pratt, Newsome, Barnhart, Sebastian, Power, Thunberg, Vivirito, Morton.)

Recreation Committee

Chairman Power read the minutes of the meeting held on May 12, 2005. (Minutes are on file.) (Rep. Collins arrived while the minutes were being read.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Harrell, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1064 - Parks & Recreation

Motion for \$2,488,769 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Pratt.

In response to Rep. Sebastian, Director John Silsby explained that the Senior Center is outsourcing the Meals on Wheels program and that there is an expected reduction in participation for the summer playground program.

(Rep. Bartinik arrived at 7:15 p.m.)

The vote on \$2,488,769 carried unanimously.

Account 2010 - Golf Course Fund

Motion for \$1,079,173 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

John Silsby stated in response to Rep. Cerf that fees were raised 3% across the board for 2005.

The Town Manager responded to Rep. Steinfeld explaining the change in the account due to

reallocation of building maintenance funds to Public Works which handles repairs and maintenance for other town facilities.

The vote on \$1,079,173 carried unanimously.

Account 3260 - Community Events

Motion for \$25,134 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Esker Point Beach Improvement

Motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins.

Rep. Power stated that the committee followed the action taken by the Council and that they felt there was enough natural shade provided by the trees. Rep. Sebastian stated he would not support the \$0 figure.

The vote on \$0 carried 23 in favor, 9 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Weil, Stein, Baril, Steere, Sebastian, Schmidt, Steinfeld, Morton, Harrell.)

Capital Item - Trail Improvement

Motion for \$65,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Miner.

The vote carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts.)

Capital Item - Park Improvement

Motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

The Town Manager responded to concerns raised by Rep. Sebastian stating that there is no Town staff time charged to this project for FYE 2006.

The vote on \$25,000 carried 32 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Smuts.)

Capital Item - Open Space Acquisition and Development

Motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Swift.

Rep. Cerf spoke in favor of continued support for open space and preservation in our town and for economic assistance funding to attract and encourage small business development.

The vote on \$25,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Noank Town Dock Area Improvements

Motion for \$85,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Stein.

Rep. Power reviewed the committee action on this account as requested by Rep. Thunberg.

In response to Rep. Sebastian, the Town Manager stated that this expenditure is for supplies, paving and landscaping, and that the engineering is completed.

(Rep. delaCruz arrived during this discussion.)

The vote on \$85,000 carried 32 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Harrell.)

Rules & Procedures Committee

Chairman Weil read the minutes from the meeting held on April 6, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Morton, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Account 1003 - Voter Registration

Motion for \$88,847 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Weil, seconded by Rep. Collins.

In response to concerns, Registrar Alan Palmer explained the process that is being followed for the selection of electronic voting machines. He stated that public input will be solicited at district hearings and that both Town Registrars support selecting machines that provide a printed backup.

The vote on \$88,847 carried unanimously.

Account 1004 - Probate

Motion for \$19,350 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Weil, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1005 - Town Clerk

Motion for \$400,736 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Weil, seconded by Rep. Pratt and so voted unanimously.

The Moderator announced a 10 minute recess.

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Pratt read the minutes of the meeting held May 16, 2005. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1063 - Groton Public Library

Motion for \$1,778,415 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Barnhart and so voted unanimously.

Account 1001 - Legislative Policy

Motion for \$59,650 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Swift and so voted unanimously.

Account 1007 - Regional Agencies

Motion for \$ 90,778 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Dowling and so voted unanimously.

Account 1065 - Other Libraries

Motion for \$185,537 for Mystic & Noank Library as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Motion for \$16,250 for Bill Memorial Library as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Swift.

The vote on \$16,250 was 32 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Power)

Account 3310 - Connecticard Fund

Motion for \$21,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Swift and so voted unanimously.

Finance Committee**Account 10260 - Groton Ambulance**

Motion for \$75,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously.

Account 10261 - Mystic River Ambulance

Motion for \$37,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins.

In response to Rep. Granatosky, the Town Manager stated there was no further information available on contributions from the Town of Stonington to Mystic River Ambulance.

The vote on \$37,500 carried unanimously.

Account 10263 - LCL Emergency Plan Council

Motion for \$1,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Dowling and so voted unanimously.

Account 2060 - Mumford Cove

Motion for \$10,800 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Account 4010 - Groton Sewer District

Motion for \$1,381,646 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1076 - Debt Service

Motion for \$2,416,040 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 5010 - Capital Reserve Fund

Motion for \$3,108,999 was made by Moderator Dunbar-Rose, seconded by Rep. Schmidt. Finance Director Sal Pandolfo explained the accounting procedure to obtain this figure. He stated that it reflects the actions taken by the RTM on Capital Items: 6P restoring \$120,000; 6H deleting \$15,000; and 6M restoring \$49,999. The vote on \$3,108,999 carried unanimously.

Account 1075 - Reserves/Contributions

Motion for \$2,024,712 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Dowling and so voted unanimously.

Account 1077 - Contributions to Other Funds

Motion for \$415,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1074 - Contingency

Motion for \$350,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts. In response to Rep. Sebastian, the Town Manager stated that unexpended money is returned to the General Fund and that the \$21,000 transferred for the Mystic River dredging project in the current fiscal year would be encumbered for future completion of this project. The vote on \$350,000 carried unanimously.

G. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:26 p.m. was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk